MINUTES
MICHIGAN STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION WORKSHOP
March 29, 2007
Lansing, Michigan

Meeting noticed in accordance with Open Meetings Act, Public Act 267 of 1976.

Present:	Ted Wahby, Chair Linda Miller Atkinson, Vice Chair James S. Scalici, Commissioner
Also Present:	Kirk Steudle, Director Larry Tibbits, Chief Operations Officer Leon Hank, Chief Administrative Officer Frank E. Kelley, Commission Advisor Marneta Griffin, Executive Assistant Jerry Jones, Commission Auditor Patrick Isom, MDOT Attorney General John Polasek, Bureau Director, Highway Development Susan Mortel, Bureau Director, Transportation Planning Susan Gorski, Section Manager, Statewide Planning Tim Hoeffner, Administrator, Intermodal Policy
Excused:	James R. Rosendall, Commissioner Maureen Miller Brosnan, Commissioner

A list of those people who attended the workshop is attached to the official minutes.

Chair Wahby called the workshop to order at 10:55 a.m. in the Bureau of Aeronautics Conference Room in Lansing, Michigan.

The Workshop topic is MI Transportation Plan: Moving Michigan Forward—What We Heard, and was conducted by Susan Mortel, Bureau Director, and Susan Gorski, Section Manager, Transportation Planning.

Ms. Mortel's portion focused on:

Findings on What We Heard
This State Long-Range Transportation Plan covers a 25 year period. It does not contain 25 years worth of projects, but it does define the challenges, vision, goals, decision principles, and strategies. In our particular instance we will continue our focus of corridors of highest significance.

This Plan evolved over three phases. Phase 1 was the Internal Organization, taking place from December 2004 to October 2005; Phase 2 was setting the vision, taking place from February 2006 to January 2007; Phase 3 is to create and deploy the Plan, taking place from March 2007 to

June 2007. The process produced a comprehensive picture of the state of the transportation system including the vision, defining corridors of significance, identifying the gaps between modes, gaps in service, and revenues, and the regional differences that make our state different from any other state. Michigan's preferred vision not only points out actions to be taken to satisfy the future needs in transportation, but also intends to bring new economic opportunities to Michigan through investment in the transportation system.

We have heard from the public regarding what they want: greater transportation choices and greater access to transportation facilities. We had three rounds of Economic Advisory Group workshops, three rounds of Regional Workshops with invited stakeholders, interviews with invited stakeholders, two rounds of Regional public open houses, two statewide random household surveys (a third to be conducted during the final 45-day comment period), two on-line questionnaires (a third to be conducted during the final 45-day comment period), consultations, and involvement from the MDOT Leadership Team. This plan sets forth the decision principles necessary to advance the vision and move Michigan forward, recognizing limited resources of today.

Transportation Priorities

Between February 21-28, 2006, 1,100 Michigan adult residents were asked, in thinking about Michigan's priorities for the future, to tell us how important it is that Michigan spend more resources to improve certain areas. The public's priorities lay in better pavement, better traffic flow, and faster and more efficient completion of highway projects. Additional priorities lay in safer highways, greater availability of long-distance transportation options (i.e., intercity passenger rail and buses), and more availability of public transportation options. Two-thirds (66%) of the public is satisfied with the job that MDOT is doing--satisfaction decreases the older one gets.

Economic Advisory Group (EAG)

MDOT invited this group to provide guidance to the planning process and, in particular, to advise on ways to connect transportation planning to economic vitality in Michigan. The EAG met three times over the course of plan development: first in March to solicit input regarding their vision for Michigan's transportation system in 2030; in June to solicit input on the draft Public Vision; and finally in November to solicit input for the Preferred Vision. Key issues that this group discussed were new sources of dedicated financing, new sources for new vision, innovation emphasis on smart systems and ITS, separate freight and passenger systems, and focus on the huge number of system-related needs (i.e. maintain, improve current highway system).

Stakeholders

Respondents were very thoughtful in their discussion of the goals and concerns they have for transportation in Michigan. These discussions provided the project team with a snapshot view of common stakeholder issues and concerns. Some key issues identified include the need for a more balanced transit system; better linkage between land use and transportation; system preservation; maintenance; asset management; congestion; and safety. All issues and concerns heard during the interview process were part of the input into the Public Vision.

Public
When asked what attributes of a transportation system the public would like, it boiled down to sustainability (better jurisdictional coordination and cooperation on land use decisions that affect transportation, and better community planning to design/minimize sprawl); choice (innovative approaches to public transportation, additional multi-modal and connectivity among modes, and complete networks and connectivity between modes); safety (concern about pedestrian travel, bicycle access, and improved infrastructure), and; focus on funding/financing for all modes.

Scenario Planning Workshop
In October 2006 the Leadership Team for MDOT participated in a vision workshop. The purpose of this workshop was to develop the concepts for the final 2030 vision. A scenario planning exercise was used. Scenario planning is a strategic planning technique that is used to develop flexible long-term plans. Scenario planning is based on the development of a number of "possible futures." These scenarios combine known facts about the future, such as demographics, geography, existing condition information, with plausible alternative social, technical, economic and political trends which are key driving forces. Scenario planning helps stimulate discussion of issues that are difficult to know or understand and prompts leaders to think beyond a simple trend line of the status quo.

Common Strategies
There are nine elements that were common to all three of the scenarios discussed by the Leadership Team. These elements are: 1) the integrated system involves the entire system, all roads and modes, not just the state trunkline system; 2) integration goes beyond transportation to include integration of transportation with land use, economic and environmental systems; 3) MDOT will be the leader in facilitating regional operations and preservation of this integrated system; 4) the integrated system must capitalize on the inherent advantages of each mode to maximize the efficiency of freight movement; 5) funding is flexible so that investments match the highest priority user needs; 6) MDOT is a flexible, adaptable and responsive organization; 7) continued emphasis on safety; 8) the integrated system must address the public's demand for more transit; and 9) technology and innovation are foundations of the integrated system.

Preferred Vision for Transportation

The 2030 Preferred Vision
The 2030 Preferred Vision was created by melding the nine elements that were common to all of the scenarios with the Preferred Public Vision values from our visioning process. Michigan's 2030 integrated transportation system will be the foundation of the state's economic vitality and will sustain quality of life for its residents. Transportation providers throughout the state will work together to address the system's needs holistically. The entire system, all roads and modes, will be maintained, preserved and protected as one of the state's most important physical assets. The transportation system in 2030 will be responsive to the public's demand for more transit and non-motorized choices. Safety will be a primary goal.

Support for Vision
Eighty-four percent of the public agree that Michigan's transportation planning for the future should focus more on all modes of transportation—such as public transportation, non-motorized travel, and intercity rail—not just car and truck traffic.

While some components of the long-range vision are slightly more important than others to the public, all components of the vision are vital to the public. The components that need to be emphasized the most according to the public are: 1) modernize, expand, and connect the system to support economic growth and better facilitate the movement of goods, people, and services, and 2) make the transportation system physically and economically accessible to all residents of Michigan. The two goals that are considerably less likely to need emphasis are: 1) expand MDOT's coordination and collaboration with both the public and private sector, and 2) reduce the vulnerability of transportation facilities and its users to terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and other risks.

Ms. Mortel turned the remainder of the presentation over to Ms. Gorski.

Goals

Part of the visioning process created the goals that we needed to strive for in terms of achieving the vision. The goals are stewardship (preserve transportation system investments, protect the environment, and utilize public resources in a responsible manner), safety and security (continue to improve transportation safety and ensure the security of the transportation system), system improvement (modernize and enhance the transportation system to improve mobility and accessibility), efficient and effective operations (improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the transportation system and transportation services and expand MDOT's coordination and collaboration with partners).

Objectives

Objectives under each goal area are associated with three categories: integration, economic benefit, and quality of life. Each provides a tight link between MI Transportation Plan and MDOT's mission statement: *"Providing the highest quality integrated transportation services for economic benefit and improved quality of life."*

Technical Reports

Seventeen technical reports were created, representing hundreds of pages of data and analysis examining issues for every mode of transportation, as well as important related topics such as the environment, land use, and economy. These reports are: Aviation, Conditions and Performance, Economic Outlook, Environmental, Finance, Freight, Highways and Bridges, Integration, Intercity Passenger, Land Use, MPO/RPA, Non-Motorized Safety, Security, Socioeconomics, Transit, and Travel Characteristics.

Corridors

We looked at our transportation system in terms of corridors. Corridors for us, is an integrated, multi-modal system of transportation infrastructure along geographic corridors that provide a high level of support for the international, national, and state economies. These corridors connect activity centers within and outside Michigan and serve the movements of people, services, and goods vital to the economic prosperity of the state. The significance of the designation of a corridor is so that we can turn our focus on the corridors so that we can be appropriate stewards of the public trust, and make the most effective use of limited transportation revenue, MDOT will focus on improvement to the condition and efficient operation of multi-modal corridors of highest significance to the Michigan economy.

The additional rationale for corridor approach is to support existing business, encourage growth, enhance economic competitiveness, and to facilitate the movement of goods, people, and services.

Corridor criteria are looked at in a broader sense—more than just highways and roadways. This Plan looks at highest volumes of traffic, highest values of goods, multi-modal, activity centers and connectivity—what activities support economic development (quality of life, resources, educated work force, etc.). Some of the things looked at when identifying activity centers were population centers, commercial areas, tourism, education/technology centers, life science facilities, passenger facilities, freight facilities, international border crossings, military bases, and correctional facilities. Fifty-one activity centers within the state and a number of out-state activity centers were identified in which our transportation system connects.

Corridors of Significance

Three levels of corridors were identified: national/international, statewide, and regional. These three corridor levels serve as the activity centers and provide the key linkages in terms of movement throughout the state. Looking at the national corridors alone, we are servicing 72% of the population and 83% of the jobs. When you add in the statewide system of corridors, about 92% of Michigan's population resides within 10 miles of those corridors of significance. In going through our technical analysis, we are also looking at average annual daily truck traffic on highways, rail freight, air cargo service, water ports, and public transit service.

There were common themes as we looked at the corridors, and common issues across the national/international and statewide corridors. Common issues are repeatedly identified in multiple corridor profiles and are identified as barriers to economic growth and competitiveness. Those we identified are congestion, aging infrastructure, need for modernization, and additional support for public transit. Similar strategies are recommended in multiple corridors to address these issues.

Significance of being a "corridor" for MDOT are: management of them, operational aspects, and financial needs. We created a standardized set of corridor strategies, and identified a set of corridor objectives that applies to all corridors. Basically what these come up with are decision principles. MDOT developed decision principles to guide the management, operation, and investment decisions for transportation facilities within these integrated, multi-modal corridors. Many of these principles can be applied outside the corridors as well. Decision principles and strategies for these corridors include: priority, coordination, innovative partnerships and programs, asset management, system-wide operational focus, and intelligent transportation systems (ITS).

The Detroit to Chicago corridor is the most valued corridor in the state. The Sault Ste. Marie to Bay City corridor includes 3% of the population, 3% of the jobs, 15.6 million tons and $30 billion truck freight, 239,000 tons and $83 million rail freight, 11,800 average annual daily traffic volume, $2.2 billion per year in freight (International Border), key linkages to I-75, and 3.3 million vehicles per year (Mackinaw Bridge).

Achieving the vision of the MI Transportation Plan requires investment levels that provide balanced transportation by investing in all transportation modes. MDOT will strategically invest in those elements that have the most potential to also address needs and enhance system integration and performance. The MI Transportation Plan primary focus is on the parts of the transportation system that the MDOT: 1) has jurisdiction over, 2) provides funding for, or 3) regulates. The statewide long-term transportation needs for the department are split into eight categories: aviation, freight, highway expansion, highway other, highway preservation, highway modernization, multi-modal preservation, and multi-modal expansion. There is a direct linkage between the performance of the state's transportation system and its economic performance. MI Transportation Plan provides the strategic direction for achieving the vision. MI Transportation Plan focus for system improvement, efficient and effective operations, safety and security, and stewardship, formulated with advice and input from all over the state, based on detailed technical analysis and projections, represents a significant, but necessary, shift in the way transportation moves forward in Michigan.

Draft Plan for Final Public Comment
This begins the 45-day public comment period. This will close out on May 14th at noon. After any changes have been made, the document will be prepared as a final and submitted to the Governor for her approval, who will then send it to FHWA.

Ms. Gorski asked for questions; none were forthcoming at this time.

Chair Wahby recommended that the Commissioners take the information home, review it, and get back to the Commission Advisor with questions or comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the Chair Wahby declared the workshop adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

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Frank E. Kelley
Commission Advisor